



## **Township of Chatham**

### **Green Grounds and Maintenance Policy**

The policy encourages and promotes measures and initiatives that protect, preserve, and enhance the environmental quality and health of the residents of the community.

An integrated approach is used, incorporating efficient landscape design, minimization of water consumption, utilization of recycled materials and compost, and implementation of an integrated pest management (IPM) policy.

#### **GREEN GROUNDS AND MAINTENANCE PRACTICES**

##### **1. Efficient Landscape Design**

- Use native, low maintenance plants when possible (as native species require less maintenance and provide valuable habitat for local wildlife)
- Group plantings according to their water needs.
- Continue to strive for “zero irrigation” by using low-water-use plants when possible
- Design landscaping with stormwater management and energy efficient maintenance in mind while promoting aesthetically pleasing public space. Consider property contours and create plantings that will slow water flows and filter runoff to improve groundwater recharge and prevent erosion.
- Use of pea gravel for walkways rather than macadam to improve groundwater recharge and prevent erosion.
- Reduce water evaporation by mulching plantings
- Minimize lawn areas to reduce required maintenance, and replace lawn areas with higher value landscaping.

##### **2. Minimize Water Consumption**

- The Township will incorporate plantings that do not require irrigation systems where possible.

- Continue to strive for “zero irrigation” by using only low-water-use plants when possible.
- Further water conservation by installing automatic flush and sink sensors in Township buildings wherever possible.

### **3. Recycled and Composted Materials**

- Use only recycled/composted mulch material on Township grounds.
- Educate residents on the benefits of recycled/composted materials.
- Continue cut-it-and-leave-it practice on all Township grounds and playing fields when the health and safety of users is not impacted.

### **4. Environmentally-Conscious Maintenance**

- Use only recycled/composted mulch material on all Township grounds.
- Significantly reduce or eliminate the use of conventional pesticides through an Integrated Pest Management program.
- Avoid excessive fertilizer use. Test soils for pH to determine which plants are best-suited to the soil type. Further test soils to determine composition, and then apply specific fertilizers to correct soil chemistry if needed instead of using a generic mix that often provides excess phosphorus.
- Improve operations with efficient watering schedules, improved irrigation equipment, and rainwater capture. Water the landscape only when needed instead of setting schedules that are not sensitive to weather and species-specific needs. Minimize evaporation, and utilize efficient irrigation techniques, such as drip irrigation systems. Be sure to search for and fix leaks promptly.